State of California
Business, Transportation & Housing Agency
Department of Transportation

Prepared by:
Gary Winters
Chief
Division of Environmental Analysis

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

10-Cal-4, KP 34.0/37.7 (PM 21.1/23.4)
Action Item

CTC Meeting: October 3, 2002

Reference No.: 2.2c.(9)

Original Signed By:
ROBERT L. GARCIA
Chief Financial Officer
October 1, 2002

APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING TO CONSTRUCT TWO-LANE EXPRESSWAY ON NEW ALIGNMENT IN CALAVERAS COUNTY IN THE CITY OF ANGELS CAMP

RESOLUTION E-02-51

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The attached resolution proposes to approve for future consideration of funding the following project for which a Negative Declaration has been completed:

- Route 4 in Calaveras County - Construct two-lane expressway on new alignment in the City of Angels Camp

The project is fully funded in the 2002 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) with Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds and Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) funds. The total cost of the project is $31,438,000 with $18,453,000 from IIP funds. Construction is scheduled to begin in FY 2004/05

The Negative Declaration and supporting Initial Study has been transmitted to California Transportation Commission staff.

The Department of Transportation has approved the project for construction. This approval and the resulting filing of the Notice of Determination with the Office of Planning and Research will satisfy the environmental requirements for this stage of the project planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-02-51.

Attachment

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Future Consideration of Funding
10-Cal-4, KP 34.0/37.7 (PM 21.1/23.4)

Resolution E-02-51

1.1 **WHEREAS,** the California Department of Transportation (Department) has completed a Negative Declaration in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, the CEQA Guidelines, and the California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations for the following project:

- Route 4 in San Joaquin County – Construct two-lane expressway on new alignment in the City of Angels Camp

1.2 **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, has considered the information contained in the Negative Declaration; and

1.3 **WHEREAS,** the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

2.1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby approve the above referenced project.

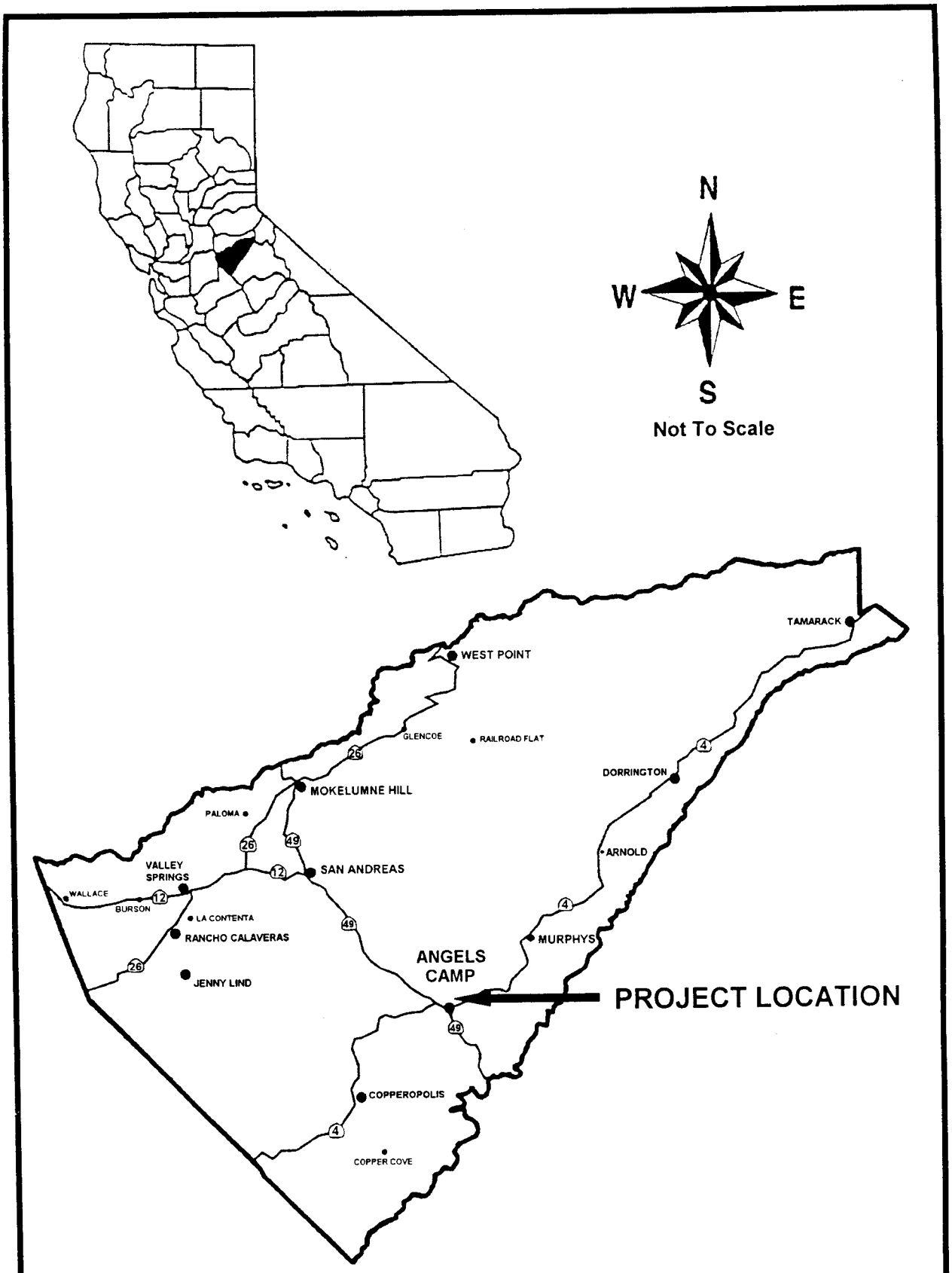

FIGURE 1	PROJECT VICINITY MAP CAL-4 KP 33.9/37.6 (PM 21.08/23.38) 10-362500	Caltrans

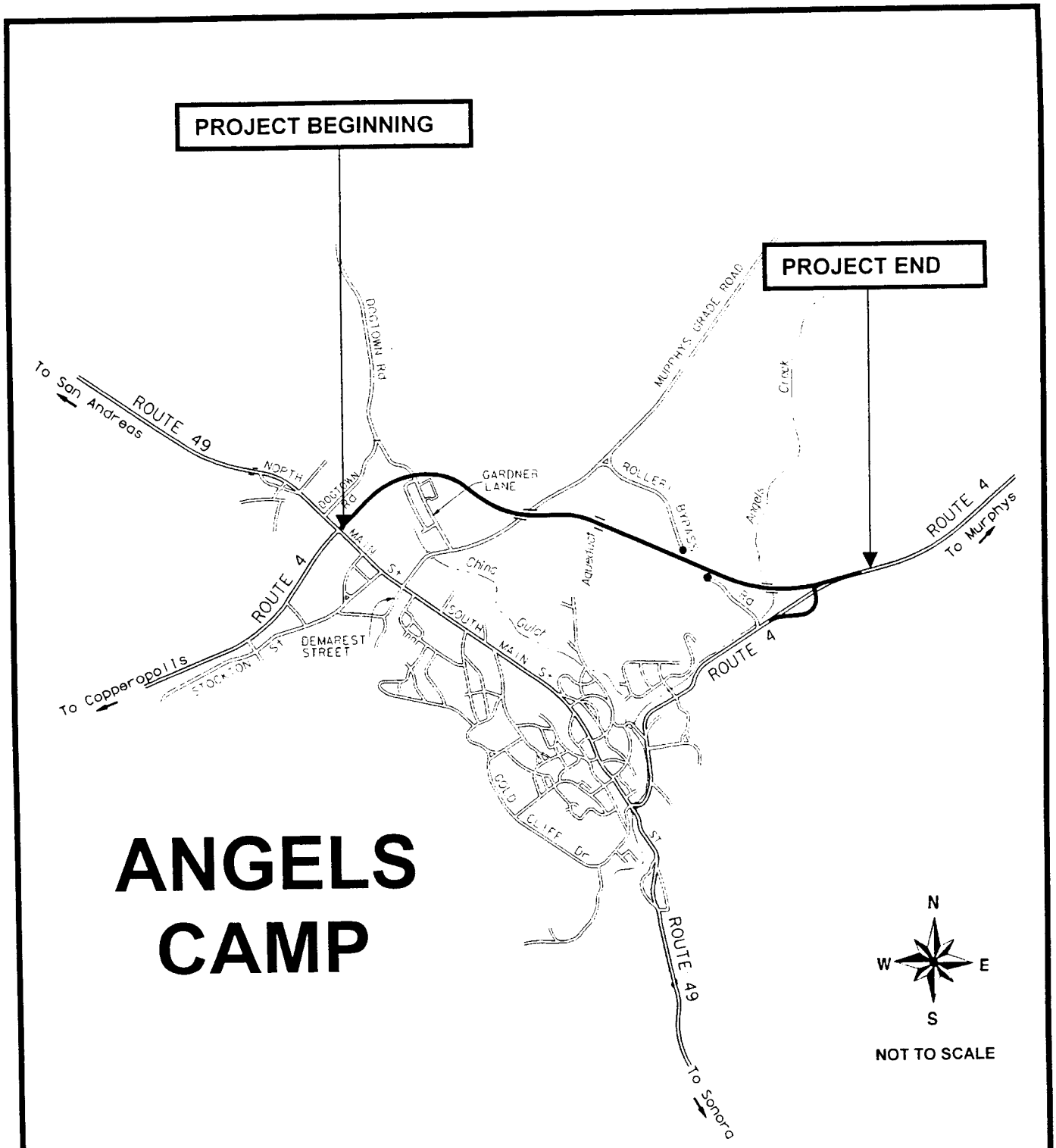

FIGURE 2	PROJECT LOCATION MAP CAL-4 KP 33.9/37.6 (PM 21.08/23.38) 10-362500	Caltrans

Summary

Project Description

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to construct a two-lane expressway on a new alignment, from the north junction of State Routes 4 and 49 in Angels Camp, in Calaveras County (Figure 1). The expressway would join existing Route 4 approximately 0.57 miles (0.9 kilometers) east of the intersection with Rolleri Bypass Road. Through-traffic on Route 4 would then be able to bypass the historic downtown area of Angels Camp. The proposed bypass would be approximately 2.3 miles (3.7 kilometers) in length.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to alleviate congestion in downtown Angels Camp by providing an alternative route for State Route 4 traffic. The new route, built at current design standards, would remove inter-regional traffic from Angels Camp, and relieve some of the chronic congestion on State Route 4/49. With traffic re-routed, downtown Angels Camp becomes accessible to local residents.

The Angels Camp Bypass is needed because the existing State Route 4/49 through Angels Camp is a substandard uncontrolled access facility and does not provide an adequate facility for existing and projected traffic demands.

Proposed Alternatives

The proposed alternatives for this project include the no-build alternative and three build alternatives.

No-Build Alternative

Under the no-build alternative, State Routes 4 and 49 through Angels Camp would remain the same. Congestion from both regional and inter-regional traffic would continue to increase through the historic downtown area. The no-build alternative would not correct the traffic delays

and congestion that currently afflict downtown Angels Camp. The identified transportation needs for the area would not be met.

Alternative 2A

Alternative 2A begins at the northern intersection of Routes 4 and 49, creating a four-legged intersection in place of a three-legged intersection (Figure 3). Currently controlled by stop signs, this intersection would have signal lights installed as part of the proposed project. Alternative 2A runs parallel to Dogtown Road for 900 feet (273 meters), then bridges Gardner Lane approximately 800 feet (243 meters south of the Dogtown Road and Gardner Lane intersection. There will be no interruption of Gardner Lane and no access to the bypass from Gardner Lane. The alignment then runs southeast, skirting the edge of Bald Hill until it joins Murphy's Grade Road, 518 m (1700 ft) east of the Gardner Lane and Murphy's Grade Road intersection. A bridge will span Murphy's Grade Road, with no interruption of, or access from, Murphy's Grade Road. As the route continues east, another structure would be built to avoid wetlands as well as the water penstock and underground sewer line that cross the alignment. The above-ground pipeline carries water for Utica Power and the City of Angels Camp and cannot support the weight of fill material.

From this point, the proposed alignment traverses over rangeland, crossing Rolleri Bypass Road roughly 3000 feet (900 meters) from Murphy's Grade Road. Caltrans would create cul-de-sacs on both sides of Rolleri Bypass Road, so there would be no access to the bypass. East of Rolleri Bypass Road, the alignment crosses Angels Creek. At that location, a 370 feet (100 meters) bridge is proposed to minimize disturbance to the environmentally sensitive areas below.

The bypass ties back into existing Route 4 with an at-grade (level with the roadway) T-intersection and continues another 650 feet (198 meters) past this intersection as it transitions into existing Route 4.

Alternative 2B

Alternatives 2A and 2B differ only slightly (Figure 3). While Alternative 2A follows Dogtown Road closely, Alternative 2B shifts slightly to the south. Alternative 2B proposes to cross

Gardner Lane 1000 feet (300 meters) south of the Dogtown Road/Gardner Lane intersection with a bridge. There would be no access from Gardner Lane to the new Route 4. The new route skirts the side of Bald Hill, and bridges over Murphy's Grade Road, about 1700 feet (518 meters) east of the intersection of Murphy's Grade Road and Gardner Lane. From this point on, Alternatives 2A, and 2B are the same.

Alternative 2C

Alternative 2C is the preferred alternative as it reduces the impacts to wetlands (below 1/2 acre) in the project area, greatly reducing consultation time with the Army Corps. of Engineers. This alternative differs only slightly from 2A and 2B. Alternative 2C follows Alternative 2A from the Route 4/49 junction to beyond the Gracewood Manor Assisted Living Home, and impacts the Gracewood Manor Assisted Living Home as 2A does. From that point, Alternative 2C deviates south and meets the Alternative 2B alignment west of Gardner Lane. Alternative 2C proposes to cross Gardner Lane 920 feet (280 meters) south of the Dogtown Road/Gardner Lane intersection with a bridge. There would be no access from Gardner Lane to the new Route 4. The new alignment skirts the side of Bald Hill and bridges over Murphy's Grade Road, about 1700 feet (518 meters) east of the intersection of Murphy's Grade Road and Gardner Lane. From this point on, Alternatives 2A, 2B and 2C are the same. The final selection of an alternative will not be made until the project's impacts and public comments on the EA/IS have been fully evaluated.

Preferred Alternative

Based on community and agency input, and engineering and environmental analysis, Alternative 2C has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project. This alternative is described in detail in Section 2.2 (Alternatives Considered) and Section 2.2.4. The environmental impacts are relatively the same for Alternatives 2A, 2B, and 2C. However, Alternative 2C would incorporate an earth berm instead of a sound wall to minimize noise impacts. Residents receiving the noise reduction have expressed the desire for an earth berm as opposed to a soundwall.

Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

Construction of the Preferred Alternative (2C) would affect wetland, noise, biological, historical and visual resources. In addition, private properties would have to be acquired.

Wetland and Waters of the United States

Alternative 2C would impact 0.45 acres (0.19 ha) of wetland and waters of the United States (0.33 acres of wetlands and 0.12 acres of other waters of the U.S.). This document proposes mitigation measures for temporary wetland impacts. Final mitigation measures for permanent impacts would be decided through negotiations and input from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers before finalization of the environmental document. Caltrans will avoid and minimize wetland impacts to the maximum extent practicable before resorting to permanent take of wetlands. All practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands are incorporated pursuant to Executive Order 11990 (42 F.R. 26961, May 24, 1977).

Noise

Noise abatement is required for this project. An earth berm would be constructed to reduce noise impacts in accordance with Federal Highways Administration's guidance under Title 23, Part 772 of the code of Federal Regulations for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise.

Biology

The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service has agreed with the Federal Highway Administration's determination that the project is not likely to adversely affect the California Red Legged Frog (Biological Opinion, Appendix F). US Fish and Wildlife Service has determined it appropriate to append this project to the Service's March 11, 1997, *Formal Programmatic Consultation Permitting Projects with Relatively Small Effects on the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle Within Jurisdiction of the Sacramento Office* (Programmatic Consultation) (Appendix F). Details of mitigation requirements can be found in Section 3.8.1 of this document.

Relocation

Alternative 2C would displace four single-family residences, (one is a mobile home), one convalescent center (Gracewood Manor Assisted Living Home), and eight businesses. Those relocated would receive fair treatment as required by law and according to the Relocation Assistance Program as specified under Public Law 91-646, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition policies act of 1970, as amended. Implementation of the Relocation Assistance Program would reduce impacts below a level of significance.

Historical

The new alignment will pass over two historic mining ditches determined to be eligible for the National Historic Register and therefore are considered Section 4(f) resources. Chapter 4 of this document contains the Section 4(f) evaluation of the ditches. Impact to the ditches would be mitigated according to the type and level of documentation determined by the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) division of the National Park Service. A Memorandum of Agreement, detailing the required documentation of the historic ditches, was completed for the project in June 2002. The FHWA, SHPO and Caltrans have concurred on the memorandum. A copy can be found in Appendix H of this document.

Visual Aesthetics

Because construction of the bypass/expressway will be a cut slope design, any of the alternatives would result in visual impacts due to the grading of slopes, removal of vegetation, and introduction of a roadway and bridges where none had previously existed. A Landscape Mitigation and Re-vegetation Plan (including biological mitigation) would be prepared for the final design of the chosen alternative. Using the mitigation plan would reduce impacts below a level of significance.